have chosen industry and renown, or those others who have concentrated on hard living and the enjoyment of the pleasures of life, they all seem so ebullient, so much Lower Burman and not of the court of Mandalay.

My grandfather was a pleader by profession, but by reputation much more—he was a classical scholar, famed for his fiery temper, his forthrightness and the stern discipline he imposed on all his children, grandchildren, dependents and anyone else who was given into his charge. He was also known for sudden progressive and even radical courses of action while expressing most reactionary views. My mother says he was a great man. My aunts loved to tell of his mental prowess, of how he never learnt English, never spoke it, but always as he did his pleading in court he could understand everything that was said around him in English; my mother also told us of how beautiful he looked on a horse; and when he was playing *chinlon*, which is a light cane ball to be kept in the air by tossing with legs, shoulders or any part of one's body that agility can devise, his short strong body, bare except for the longyi tucked about his loins, with tattoo marks in a blue-ringed pattern from waist to knee, and his long thick hair in a knot on the crown of his head, all looked more fair, more *manly* than the cropped hair, the shoes and socks and collars of the present junior generation.

Grandfather started his family in a village just outside Moulmein, but a fire burnt down the house when my mother was still very young, and he decided to bring his family to Thaton and set up a practice there. He chose a site outside the town proper. It was then surrounded by muddy fields and, knowing Thaton at present with its 220 inches of rain a year, I can sympathize with my aunt Kyi-Kyi-Lon, who is said to have rolled herself on the ground with rage at beholding such a prospect.

The house which Grandfather built still stands today. There are not many houses left in Burma which reflect so well the type of comfort which a well-to-do family provided for in those days, or which have been built with so much regard to the customs of daily life and occasional festivities, and so little regard for appearance. Grandfather enclosed

that is, the D.I.S. (District Inspector of Schools), whether active or retired, was usually more permanent and could dig his toes in more happily. The social relationship was also ideal. Earning less than the other officials, he could yet offer them this rich hospitality of natural pleasures.

When we were in Maubin the D.I.S. was our friend U Taik Wan. He and his family of ten sons and daughters had the u-yin developed to its fullest. He had a low large house where the river took a bend and had fenced in this bed with bamboo stakes and a diving platform. The garden orchard stretched away from the house to a bamboo hut at the far end, with open verandahs under the trees. The speciality of his orchard were his sweet-sour marian trees. The marian is the *Ionea Burmanica*, common to Burma and northern Assam, where it forms an ideal appetizer for the heat-drowsy inhabitants. It is sour, of a sharp biting sourness which now makes my mouth water with longing. It is too sour to eat except doused in strong salt sauce or fish paste, salt being our antidote to sourness, in which I differ from the English idea of cooking, for salt combines and merges in with sourness whereas a pound of sugar thrown into a gooseberry tart would still leave it too sour for me. The marian is a small fruit, green when young and orange-yellow when ripe, with a pretty purple seed which has given its name to the Burmese colour "mauve". There is a sweet variety which is not popular. Sometimes, however, a prize tree is found which produces a sweet-sour marian, a sour fruit with its sting taken off. Such a tree should be treated with the greatest care; its fruits must never be salted or pickled as sour fruits are treated, because the "sour" use would communicate itself to the tree by what may be called sympathetic magic. Rather, my mother made jam (with sugar) of these marians, for the improvement of U Taik Wan's tree.

My mother was very punctilious about such things; the girl servants were never allowed to pluck the citron leaves for our salad because a woman in menstruation makes the tender leaves of the citron tree curl up and lose their succulence when she plucks them. U Taik Wan had a row of sweet-sour marian trees which he guarded from flying foxes by throwing a net across one face of them, showing a wall of these creatures hanging head downwards, to passers-by.

Our pyaw-pwè-sas at the Taik Wan's always began with a lot of water-fun. We never used bathing dresses, but adapted our longyis for swimming. This longyi is shaped and wrapped, like the more famous sarong, at the waist normally, but women and girls take it above the bosom when they discard their jackets. This enables all our poorer women to bathe with perfect decorum at public wells and streams.

526 After the bath a dry longyi is slipped on over the wet one which is then
291 washed clean straight away. The poorest, who do not always possess a
515 spare longyi, sometimes let themselves into a stream gradually, lifting the longyi higher as they go in, and when the water is bosom-high they keep the garment on their head, letting it down again as they emerge. Our use for the adaptability of the longyi was to stand on a diving platform with it opened wide at the bottom, jump feet first and let the air rush in, nicking the longyi in at the ankles as we struck the water. This

makes you land with a balloon which floats you for a minute or two like those swollen celluloid ducks in babies' tubs. My friend Tin Tin Thoung was just like a swan on these occasions; she was not pretty normally, being very thin and angular, but she had a long and graceful neck, and when she floated on the water, gliding along with her neck rising out of her big round longyi, she looked like a beautiful swan to me.
[262] After bathing, the Taik Wans' mother had basketfuls of Indian corn, the tender ones boiled and the tougher ones roasted, and dishes of the peeled marians doused in fish sauce awaiting us.

981 Besides these social visits there were special festivals that came with
585 the months, and occasions common to every family's history—the ear-boring of the girl, the initiation into the priesthood of the boy, and marriages of grown-up children—which had to be celebrated in traditional forms. Most minkadaws preferred to hold marriage ceremonies in Rangoon, Moulmein or Mandalay to have as much fashion and show as possible, but the ear-boring (*nadwin*) and initiation into priesthood (*shinbyu*) find a better background in country towns. Nadwin is the coming of age of a girl, not for marriage, but for the initiation into the pleasant vanities of a woman's life. It is fine enough to sit with a rich

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER XXXVI

A BOAT-RACE

● 526 IT is four o'clock in the afternoon, and the sun is still beating down fiercely on the mile and a half broad stretch of water which extends far above and below Myanaung. But the whole population of the town, and excited family parties from a score of villages round about, are gathered on the banks of the Irrawaddy, and bustle about regardless of the heat. Girls with flowers in their hair, and the brightest of dainty silk handkerchiefs floating over their dazzling white jackets; their costly skirts trailing on the half-muddy, half-dusty grass, and the long loops of their dalizan necklaces swinging about on their bosoms, hurry hither and thither with unwonted activity, regardless of the detriment to the fragrant yellow cosmetic on their cheeks and necks, and heedless of the occasional remonstrances of the guardian duennas, hardly less excited than themselves. Young men, ordinarily scrupulous as to the jaunty set of their flowered turbans, and the carefully-arranged folds of their hundred or two-hundred rupee waistcloths, now rush backwards and forwards, apparently aimlessly, their gaung-baungs twisted on anyhow, or hanging loose round their necks, and the cherished paso girded up tightly round their loins, reckless of creases; while they have not a word to say, or even a glance to throw, at the fairest of the country's daughters. Staid old men are gathered together in knots, all talking together at the pitch of their voices, and jingling bags of rupees in one another's faces; every now and then one group rushing off to another and swelling loud talk into shouting, in a fashion of which you would not have believed the

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

526

phlegmatic old gentlemen capable, if you had seen them three days ago. Everywhere is bustle and excitement and anticipation. Even the township policemen have lost their ordinary official swagger, and are engaged in eager converse with individuals who, in ordinary times, command their attention in quite a different way.

There is very good reason for it. The full moon of Thadingyut is past; it is well on in October, and it is the time of the boat-races. For weeks past the Myanaung boat has been spurting up and down the long straight reach, or having a heavy training paddle to Akauktaung and back again, and now at last the great day has come. Myanaung has challenged Thônkwa, hitherto the unconquered champions of all the low country, and the race, in best-and-best boats, is to come off this afternoon. The down-river men with their boat, and pretty nearly the entire body of their fellow-villagers, arrived last night, and none except the privileged have seen anything of them yet, to enable them to judge whether they are in as fine form as they were last year when they rowed the Bassein boat to a standstill. No wonder there is excitement, for Myanaung is but a young subdivision, sprung up since the English occupation, with no speciality for paddlers, and Thônkwa cherishes a name for prowess on the river from far back in the old Burmese days.

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But suddenly there is a lull in the buzz of talk, and every eye is directed up the river. The boats have started for the preliminary row over the course. It is necessary to propitiate the guardian spirits of the river, and the votive offerings are therefore to be made. At the stem of each boat crouches a man holding with outstretched arms a bunch of plantains, some cooked rice, flowers, and betel, for the soothing of the water-kelpie. This precaution must on no account be omitted. Who knows what disaster might not otherwise happen? The flouted nat might upset the craft with a flip of his finger, or cling to the keelson of the boat and tire to nothing the sinews of the brawniest arms. Therefore goodly alms are given, so that all may rest with the prowess of the rival crews. This breather serves also another purpose. It enables the spectators to have a final view of the antagonists,

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2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

and to lay their last rupee or not on their champions according as their judgment or loyalty bids them. Not a man of them will back the enemy's boat. If they have not supreme confidence in the superiority of their representatives, they simply refrain from staking all they possess. But in all the vast crowd there is not a man who has not a money interest of some kind in the race. There is U Ôn, the district magistrate, in the "grand stand"—a primitive erection run up in half an hour with some sticks and bamboo matting; he is a Thônkwa man by birth himself, but nothing will persuade him to back the fishing village against the subdivision over which he now rules. Why, he has practically built and furnished all the money for the Daungsatpyan himself. The water-craft which he learnt in his native place has only prompted him to hang with greater loving care over the lines of the boat when it was building, and Ba Tu, his eldest son, wields the steering paddle in the Peacock, the pride of Myanaung. Now the old gentleman—he pulled a good oar himself twenty years ago for the very town he now longs to beat—moves about uneasily, gets up and sits down, winds and unwinds his white pawlôn, and can hardly refrain from shouting out, for the Peacock is just passing, and Ba Tu gives a yell and flourishes his paddle, and there is [201] a great shout of "Yauk-kya!" from the Myanaung partisans. Yauk-kya, or yauk-kya ba-tha, means simply "man" or "man, the son of his father," but it is a defiant challenge, or an inspiriting cheer to the Burmese. They are a fine, strong-looking lot, the Myanaung crew, perhaps a little too fleshy, and therefore possibly deficient in staying power, but all young, and worked up to a state of nearly frantic enthusiasm by the presence of their sweethearts and the momentous duty that rests upon them. Their weather-beaten old trainer paddles alongside of them in a little canoe, and begs them to be calm at the beginning and not rush themselves out at the start. The boat is a beauty, and does credit to the old magistrate in the sweeping curves of its lines. Low and as light as skilled hands can make it, it draws only a few inches of water, and does not rise much more than a foot above the surface. So thin are the sides that the boat is tourniquetted together with twisted wire

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

000 moment! From start to finish he has all his wits about him, and the stem of the boat is full on the winning-post all the time. Four years ago, when the Hlaing men seemed to be carrying all before them, it was Kya-gyi's generalship that won the day. Therefore the Myanaung magistrate is a little disconcerted at the homage paid him by his old rowing mentor, but none the less he puts on another hundred rupees with a Thônkwa lugyi who comes up at the moment. The Thônkwa men come with a bit of pace just at the finish too, and with a he-la, lu-la, yauk-kya, ba-tha, hé, dash past the winning-post.

● 526 This winning-post is not such as is used in English boat-racing. A boat is moored right out in the current with its head to the stream. At right angles to its length a long hollow bamboo stretches across the bows, and through this is passed a rattan, the end projecting an inch or two beyond the mouth of the tube at both sides. The contesting boats have each their own side and keep their own water, and the bow-paddler rises and snatches at this pan as the boat whisks past. It thus becomes a sign and proof of victory and is planted in the bows of the winner. Not a little skill is wanted on the part of both the man at the bow and the man at the stern. The former has to be sure in the eye and quick of hand, and the latter must take especial care to bring the boat past at the proper distance. It is not so very simple a matter to pull out the long cane at the terrific pace with which the boats come up, and the pan must be carried off to ensure the verdict. Sometimes both men seize it at once, and then they are almost certainly swept out of the boat, and as a rule both lose the rattan. Then it is a thaye pwè, a dead heat. But if one has the pluck and presence of mind to stick to it, then his boat has won.

Now the offerings have been made and the boats turned round, no very easy matter in the swift current with their great length. But it is effected dexterously enough. The Myanaung boat paddles up to the winning-post and young Aung Zan tries the pan to see that it runs smoothly in the [552] bamboo, and Ko Kya-gyi swings in the stern of the Thônpânhla—the Three Fair Flowers, as the Thônkwa

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

boat is called—to make sure that his man will have his proper amount of cane to grasp at. Then both boats get under the bank to avoid the force of the current, and paddle leisurely up to the starting-point, a mile or a mile and a half up the river.

The din and bustle on the bank now become greater than ever. Every one is talking and stating his views as to the result of the race, and nobody is listening to him. Betting goes on freely, and the chink of rupees is heard perpetually. It is announced that the sporting English extra assistant-commissioner from the divisional town has given as his opinion that "the fishermen" will win ; they are in better condition and cooler-headed than their opponents, and will win at the finish. There is a minute's dejection at this, and then it is all effaced by the discovery that the Chinese storekeepers have put their "bottom dollars" on the home boat. That is good news, for the Tayôk is a good judge of anything that can be betted about, and it is very seldom that he drops money. So the talk goes on till the last coin is staked. Welshers have not yet been introduced into Burma, and there is now nothing to be done but relieve one's feelings in talk, and puff furiously at big cheroots, with an occasional rush into the water to see how far the boats have got up. Old U Ôn tries to talk to the young Englishman, but it is no use, he can't keep either his mind or his eyes off the boat, and the Ayebaing improves the occasion by attempting a flirtation with the daughter of the house. But he might as well talk to the winds. She is far more excited than her father, and would be dancing about if it were not for the restraint of her old nurse, who is too blear-eyed and rheumatic to be anything but ill-natured.

But at last there is a hush and every eye is turned up the river. The boats are turning, and come drifting down to the starting-place. There is a minute or two of backing and fussing about so as to get the boats straight and the bows level, and then, with a loud shout, they are off to a start by mutual consent. A roar of pent-up excitement comes from the crowd all the way down the banks to the grand stand and then swings back again like a wave on the flat sea-sand. Served by their magnificent boat and their

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

the pan; the Thônkwa bow felt the scratch of it on his palm as it disappeared through the tube

The scene that follows is beyond description. The victorious crew spring up to dance, but the relief is inadequate. They can only escape frenzy by plunging into the river. U Ôn tucks up his waistcloth and dances round in mad delight till his stiff old legs will bear him no longer. Pompous old lugyis caper and plunge and shout; younger men can only relieve their feelings by flinging themselves in the pools on the bank and rolling about wildly in the mud; girls, who at ordinary times would hardly dare to raise their eyes to look about them, dance and shout in ecstasy, and their married guardians join in the rout. Bands from a dozen villages round about strike up, but the professional dancers who came to perform in honour of the victors are fain to look on while their intended audience go through unpremeditated figures. It always seems marvellous how the people ever get gravity of demeanour again after a great boat-race.

The contest is technically not over yet. It is a hle-pyaung lu-pyaung, that is to say, the crews have now to change boats. The Thônkwa men take the Daungsatpyan, and the home crew man the Three Fair Flowers. But to all intents and purposes the victory has been won, and the home representatives are the conquerors. The two boats paddle up again, and the fishermen go right away and win with the most consummate ease. This sets money matters on a more comfortable footing, but the Myanaung people are not a whit disconcerted. They won the real race, that in which each crew rowed in its own boat, and they receive the arguments of the Thônkwa contingent with the most self-satisfied composure. The record of the champions has been broken, and the veteran Ko Kya-gyi has at last sat in a losing boat.

A general adjournment is made back to the town. The country people have all come in their bullock waggons, and these are drawn up in comfortable places under the trees. The victorious crew go in procession up and down the main street, preceded by bands and every one in the place who can dance. Feasting is general, and then all move off to

:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

527 the plays, of which there are three or four, while some unwearied spirits can only find relief for their exultant triumph in yein dances and irresponsible performances of their own. [273] Till dawn of day the revelry goes on, but there is nothing like drunkenness. It is exceedingly seldom that you see a drunken Burman out of Rangoon, where they claim to be Europeanised. For a couple of days the excitement lasts, and then the strangers wend their way homewards, and the township calms down to its usual quiet. But for years the great event will be talked of at the local feasts, and the Yein choruses of three or four generations will tell of the gallant struggle when the Daungsatpyan beat the Thônpanhla and broke the long supremacy of the Thônkwa rowers.

177.52 ● 526 It is a great pity that these old contests are not kept up with the spirit that used to characterise them. In 1877 the then Chief Commissioner of British Burma, Mr. Rivers Thompson, believing that they led to unrestrained and dangerous gambling, issued an order forbidding all government officials to have anything to do with them, and advising that great races should be discouraged as much as possible. This policy was continued by Mr. Aitchison (late Sir Charles), and there seemed some danger that the art of making fine racing-boats would be lost, while all the fun and jollity of the old ye-pwè, kôn-pwè, land and water sports, were put an end to, without any decrease in the amount of 525 [101] gambling. The habit is as engrained with the Burman as with the Chinaman, and if there are no boat-races to bet on there are lots of other things, from pony matches to gônnyin-to, on which sporting votaries might stake their money. 526 There were still local matches between adjacent villages held, but they were but a sorry imitation of the old festivals, and 177.52 have unfortunately led to the unpleasant speculations of the West being introduced. "Barneyings," in-and-out rowing, and all the unlovely customs of Western professionalism have sprung up as a consequence of the degradation of the old manly sport. Sir Charles Bernard, who was an ardent athlete himself, did a good deal towards reviving boat-racing. Sports have been held on the Great Royal Lake at Rangoon, it may be hoped only as a preliminary measure to the encouragement of longer contests on

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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the great rivers again. The surest way of putting an end to "roping" and false rowing with the object of mere money gain, is to reintroduce the old honest, enthusiastic rivalry. Where every rower feels that the name of his village depends upon the prowess of his arm, there will be no "sugaring" and ignobly waiting, in Sheffield handicap fashion, to "have their heads loose."

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All the races in the low country are rowed in hlaw hle, or hlaw laung, that is to say, in paddle-boats. Up country there are frequently contests in hkap hle, "pull-away boats," rowed with oars, but even there the national paddle predominates. It may be mentioned that the coast men are by far the better rowers. In the Mandalay October races in 1881, a scratch Bassein boat challenged all comers, and was victorious in every match.

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There are a variety of boats, mostly, however, made on the same model, of which the laúnggo is the type. This is simply a canoe hollowed out of the trunk of a tree, the sides of which are drawn out by charring and inserting wedges; then the boat-builder chips out the centre. The laungsat is only a little larger and more commodious, plank sides being added to the solid keel, if it may be so called. The huge hnaw, or rice-boats, are made in the same fashion.

Of a different style are the pein-gaw, huge, ungainly, barge-like things, used principally at Yenangyaung for carrying oil. Along the sides, projecting over the beams of the boat, and reaching aft to the house raised on the quarter-deck, are tagin, a sort of platform for the polers to walk backwards and forwards on. Pihn-gaw keep mostly in shallow water, so that their ungainly weight may be moved along by poles, which is much quicker and less laborious work than rowing.

Barring exceptionally fine racing-boats, the hlawkadaw, or hlawga, the king's despatch boats, were the finest specimens of boat-building. They were gilt all over, even to the kat-tat, or paddles, and the stern rose high up in the air for the accommodation of the steerer. The express boats, or hpaungpaw, had usually a representation of the kalawaik, the carrying bird of Vishnu and national emblem of the Burmese, on the bows, and had often as many as sixty

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2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

paddlers. Down stream they went faster than a steamer; but they are never seen nowadays.

In the Rangoon Boat Club regattas on the Royal Lakes a British four usually rows a Burmese ten to fourteen paddle-boat. Honours are fairly easy with perhaps a balance in favour of the paddlers, who always get off at practically top speed.

The Intha leg rowers of the Yawnghwe Lake in the Southern Shan States, when they row in their own boats, seem likely always to beat even the best picked Burman crews.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

524 to the extremity of the line are taken. In pedan the seeds are placed in a big circle. Some one seed, either at one of the sides or at the back, is fixed upon to be hit. Any one who does so takes all, but if any other seed is knocked over you have to pay forfeit, and add one to the circle. This is, perhaps, the most outrageously noisy form of all, and, like the daungpyit, is very seldom played by any but children.

The daing or ground keeper's services are constantly being called for. A long-armed man is accused of delivering too far forward; some one has got an exceptionally big do to aim with; one of the seeds knocked over does not fall down flat, but leans up against another; somebody hits a seed already knocked down by somebody else, and by means of it manages to level some of those left standing, though his own seed never touches them; cases of this kind are always cropping up and being referred to the umpire amidst boisterous statements and precedents referred to by everybody present, for the betting spectators are often more deeply interested in the matter than the actual players. Then the police burst in and carry them all off to the lock-up, and they are duly fined for gambling, and English residents who look upon gônnyinto as only an elementary kind of marbles are astonished that people should get themselves into trouble for such a trifle. But for all that, gônnyinto, in its way, requires quite as much skill as either bowls or curling, and judgment and delicacy of touch are quite as essential as in billiards.

526 Curiously enough, taking gônnyinto for mere childishness, most foreigners look upon "Burmese football" as a game. This is certainly not the case in so far as a "game" is a striving between one or more competitors for supremacy. There are of course different degrees of proficiency, but one man cannot be pitted directly against another to see who is the better player, as you do with two lawn tennis or racket players. Primarily chinlôn, as it is called, is simply designed to exercise the body, to restore elasticity to the back and limbs cramped by sitting, reading, or writing, or even by playing chess or gônnyinto. The ball is composed of wicker-work, strips of rattan interwoven in bands so as to leave a number of pentagonal holes, and is about four

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

526

inches, or a little less, in diameter. It is extremely light, and the object is to keep the ball as long as possible in the air without touching it with the hands. Thus a single individual may play it all by himself, or there may be a circle of players who catch the ball as it comes round their way, keep it up as long as they can, until an ill-judged stroke sends it away from them to somebody else, who proceeds in a similar manner. To play it of course the feet must be without shoes and the waistcloth is tucked up close round the middle, so that the legs may be quite free. It is worth while watching a good player. He starts the ball on his knee, knocking it up, and standing on one leg all the time, or perhaps rapidly changing the knee. Suddenly he sends it up high, catches it with a back stroke with the heel, repeated perhaps several times. Then he receives it on the knee again, gradually and gently reduces the force with which he strikes it, lets it slip down to the instep, and jerks it back and forwards between the top of the foot and the knee for a time. Then from the knee he sends it into the air again, clips it between his cheek and his shoulder; then lets it run down the side to be caught up with a side stroke of the foot, or behind to be sent up by the heel, or forwards to be caught again by the knee. The last is the most difficult, because if hit too soon with the top of the thigh, the ball simply flies outwards, and cannot be saved from falling to the ground, while even in catching it with the knee, care must be taken to hit it gently. Another very difficult manœuvre is to jump into the air, catch the ball between the feet and jerk it up again before reaching the ground. Nasty tumbles are the usual result of first attempts. A good player will keep the ball up until his strength gives way, and most Burmans, if they are not ambitious to attempt difficult strokes, can keep the chinlôn up a very fair time. But it is not easy all the same. No part of the arm must be used, and using the toes is also barred, though in any case, with them a stroke would almost inevitably prove a failure. Still though spectators may stand and look on, and the players may try to give one another difficult strokes, the skill displayed in negotiating which is always applauded, yet chinlôn cannot be called a game,

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

● 526 any more than dancing the Highland Fling can, for judgment as to superiority in either case must be a mere matter of personal opinion, and cannot be governed by hard and fast rules.

These are practically the only outdoor national games. Boxing is a very common institution, but there is no ordinary practice in the evenings, and when a let-pwè comes off it is a regular ceremony more resembling what would be called in Europe a match, or a tournament, than a game. A good deal of agility and skill is shown, leaps into the air, and kicks with the bare feet, and violent upward knocks with the knee finding a place which would not be allowed by the "fancy." The first drawing of blood decides a contest, however slight the injury may be. But boxing is not common now. Among the Karens near Maulmein it is still regularly [571] kept up, and no young man would be successful in his courting unless he had taken part on some occasion or other at a let-pwè. In Rangoon nowadays contests are of regular occurrence at feast times, but the displays are in sheds and entry money is charged. Elsewhere they are not often seen, [562] and the rule that no women shall be present is always rigorously kept.

524 What may be called indoor games are numerous and various. There is a game very much like the English one known as Fox and Geese. There are three big tigers, and eleven or sometimes twelve little ones. It is called legwet kya, and the object is for the big tigers to hunt down on a draught board and eat the little ones. If, however, the cubs can corner the big ones, and prevent them from taking a leap, the latter have to succumb—starve to death in fact. Another game called pasit, or chwe pyitthi, or ansa pyitthi is a steeplechase kind of arrangement, and is a favourite with children and simple country people. It is played on a board shaped and divided like that in the figure.

Cowries are used instead of dice, and the object is to complete the tour of the board as fast as possible, and to take as many opponents as you can on the way. Thus if there were two playing, the first thrower would enter at *a*, and having reached *b*, would continue from *a* to *c*, from *c* to *d*, and so on. The second would commence at *a* also, but

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The concept of KARMA (fate) is important only in determining the general well-being of the individual, as seen in Daw Aw Zar's belief that her general good health was due to a morally-lived previous existence. "It is like a shadow". Some specific situations like being born blind is attributed to ones KARMA - in this case the person had been a notorious fighter of cocks in the previous existence; cocks being frequently blinded in the fights.

Each person is regarded as subject to some special disorder or weakness such as being especially subject to colds or headaches, or stomach troubles. Collectively these are referred to as "age-group" weaknesses. (MIYAT - girls' weakness; LULAH - boys' weaknesses.) But this is due to childhood illnesses and neglect of early troubles rather than KARMA. Persons with the weaknesses noted above avoid cucumbers (a "cold" vegetable), or hot foods including liquor (these cause greater heat to rise to the head), or green or raw vegetables (hard to digest). The choice of the correct diet to suit one's particular condition is important.

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Bodily exercise is a prime consideration for health. Calisthenics or sports for this purpose are unknown or unrecognized and by " healthful exercise " is meant everyday work activities. Regular daily motion is regarded as necessary for health, and a purgative is taken regularly once a month. The idea is to " clean out disease ". Purgatives are taken first in most sicknesses. This is followed by drinking preparations in hot water to induce perspiration along with woolen blankets. The colour of the urine is checked "daily" since a too yellow colour indicates an unhealthy condition. If so - one must drink additional quantities of water and coconut water. "Urine takes the place of perspiration in cold weather". Over-working and lack of sleep also tend to lead to unhealthiness. The ideal

[593]

sleep period is from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. with a nap thrown in from 12 to 2 after "breakfast".

158
753

Too much worrying SAY.T.UNG.IO.NOJEN (mind-beating-because-body-crush) leads to sickness. This is a common problem for mothers who worry about their children's futures. It results in THWAYE-PYEIN (small black bitter (gall)-disorder) where the gall fluid is

BOAT RACES: There are different kinds of boat races - e.g. in some one single rower is pitted against another. In others the boats carry three rowers each and in yet others six to eight rowers on each side. If the crafts differ in weight the lighter one is made heavier to equalise the two. The race is held between two contestants only. These race meetings are held towards the rains during the months of WASO, WAGAUNG, TAZUNGMAN and THADINGYUT. In the hot season the water in the river subsides and makes it not very suitable for boat racing. During these four months, boat races are held once every three or four days and sometimes for several days in succession. The people who participate as contestants have an added interest in the outcome of the match as they also bet coconuts or money against their opponent. This is a direct transaction and not carried out through a bookmaker. It is more in the nature of a personal wager between the two. In the case of the races where there are six to seven rowers in each boat, the stakes reach three or four hundred rupees. 526● [525]

U Myaing rowed in one of these boat races when he was a young man. On that occasion he was awarded a draw. The boat that wins two successive runs wins the match. If not they are made to compete up to a total of four runs. If each of the boats alternately reach the winning post first for a total of four, then the match is declared a draw. At each of these boat races, about a thousand people attend and watch the proceedings from three o'clock to five or six in the evening. When the wager between the contestants takes the form of coconuts, cheroots, etc., the winner invites the loser and others to come and share his winnings after he has cooked the coconuts into coconut-rice, etc. [525]

Sports are held in some years towards the beginning of the cold season sometimes when there are big charities being held. There are individual races between paired men and between paired ponies. There are about 900 to a thousand spectators, and these races are held on the same principles as that of the boat races with the same rules for selection of winners and placing of bets.

These races sometimes take the form of a contest between two villages. These are big affairs with two to three thousand rupees [521]

being involved in bets. For this purpose special rowers are trained and fed by one or another of the big betters. These men are so strong and skilful that they can drive a boat carrying fifty to sixty baskets of paddy clear over a raft of a hundred bamboos tied together. A stop watch is used to time performances and a match may be arranged with another village. A rower by the name of NGA THIT once won over three thousand rupees for their village. U Myaing's share was three or four rupees. Some people in the village do not bet at all, others bet about forty to fifty rupees. 526● [525]

THE GREASED POLE: The greased pole is an amusement set up during the month of TAZAUNGMON for the KAHTEIN festival and the month of KASON for the HYAUNG-YE-THUN-BWE festival. On these occasions, besides other festivities a huge thick bamboo pole is made smooth at the joints and set upright. Then a bowl of greasy liquid such as THAYAW water (shampoo) or lard is perched towards the top of the pole in such a manner as to send the greasy liquid coursing down the pole with every slight shake it is given. On the top of the pole are placed several prizes such as items of clothing. After this people are free to get the prizes if they can. They get on one another's shoulders to reach the top. Sometimes they are successful and sometimes all of them come tumbling down. U Myaing tried this when he was young. At one KASON festival U Myaing and three others tried to reach the top by co-operating with each other but they were unsuccessful. Others try all sorts of ways such as daubing the body with mud etc.

In the village there are few entertainments, so that even if two bullocks start to fight in the fields, someone yells out the news and everyone comes out to watch. However, special matches are not arranged in their locality. [517]

There was not much of social visiting back in Pathee. Most of the visits were on business and the host proffered things such as prepared dried fish and other trifles. The talk centers around NGAPI and NGA-CHAUK. There are no visits made just because he is feeling dull and bored, although there are some people in the village who do so. 574 521

The whole family goes to the ANYEIN or marionette shows

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

000 534 Herbert Spencer, *The Origin and Function of Music.*) The simplest Burman instruments are the harp (*saung*) and the dulcimer (*patala*). The harp has a boat-shaped body of wood, with a skin stretched over it for sounding-board. The thirteen strings are of silk, strengthened with varnish. The staves of the *patala* are of dry bamboo (No. 454). These two instruments are not loud; they

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395. BOYS' BOXING-MATCH.

are used to accompany the voice, as we use a harp or guitar, and also by themselves. The loud band (*saing-dî*), which gives so much character to the *pwè*, is composed of clarions, gongs and drums. The clarion (*hnè*) is a loud and strident instrument, the effect of which is enhanced by the second clarion. These are supported by gamuts of tuned gongs (18) and drums (22) in circles (*kyi-waing* and *saing-waing*). There are two tenor drums and a bass drum (*bŏndyi*). Time is accentuated by cymbals and clappers. The tone of the gongs is so round and bright that it may be mistaken for a piano; the flourishes played on the *kyi-waing* would imply considerable execution in a pianist. Drums are struck with the fingers, gongs with padded sticks.

526 Boxing-matches are the simplest of the contests which, after plays and pageants, form the chief popular diversions. The spectators sit and stand in a wide circle. At one side is a raised platform for the judges. No women are present. The challenger executes a defiant dance

396. PONY-RACING.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

526

398. BULLOCK RACING.

in the ring and slaps his arm (*lemmáung-kat*) to the exclamation of *yánkyá! báthá!*—man that you are and son of a man! (No. 153). When some one steps into the ring to take up the challenge, the pair are conducted by seconds to the judges, who decide if they are fairly matched; they then stand aside to await their turn. Every kind of attack is fair except pulling hair and biting; a cap is tied on the head to keep the long hair from coming loose. The first trace of blood betokens defeat, but matches are very frequently drawn. This may be the reason why there is no betting. Powerful seconds are on the alert to separate the combatants if they show temper. But the absence of temper, despite the severity of the contest, is its conspicuous feature. The frank dispositions of Burman and Taláing appear to rare advantage. The high spirits of the victor overflow in chivalrous deprecation of his prowess—"the merest fluke in the world!" That among such a people the sense of personal honour is keen goes without saying. Abuse is not so cheap as in India. The *vendetta* is unknown. Fatal quarrels occasionally arise from jealousy; the old national justice put the law into the hand of a betrayed husband.

152

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Pony-racing is the sport of the North, as boat-racing is that of Pegu with its network of channels. The races are run in heats of twos, like all races in Burma. There are small stakes for the owners, but betting is the soul of the sport. In this the women freely participate. The course is flat, half

399. THE BOAT-RACE GOAL (PAN).

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

526 a mile to a mile. Popular diversions, common to Burmans and Europeans, are the race meetings, with their kindred accompaniments.

The boat-races are held at the *Thadin-dyut* festival (p. 184). Racing-canoes are forty to sixty feet long and only wide enough for one man; they are lacquered inside and out (No. 430). The canoe is paddled by a crew of eight to twenty.

[541]

400. COCK-FIGHTING.

Competing crews generally belong to different villages, which causes excitement to run high and heavy wagers to be laid. The goal is a boat moored in the river, athwart of which is fixed a long bamboo (*pan*). Through the hollow of the latter runs a loose rattan, projecting a hand-breadth at each end. The bow-hands make a dash for this rattan, and the boat that secures it is the winner. Burmans are excellent swimmers, which they need to be for these races, as the canoes are commonly swamped at the goal; but they have no swimming contests.

541 Bullock racing is a favourite sport in parts of southern Pegu. Some trouble is taken with breeding the animals and training them to trot fast. In the race they go at a gallop over a course of about half a mile.

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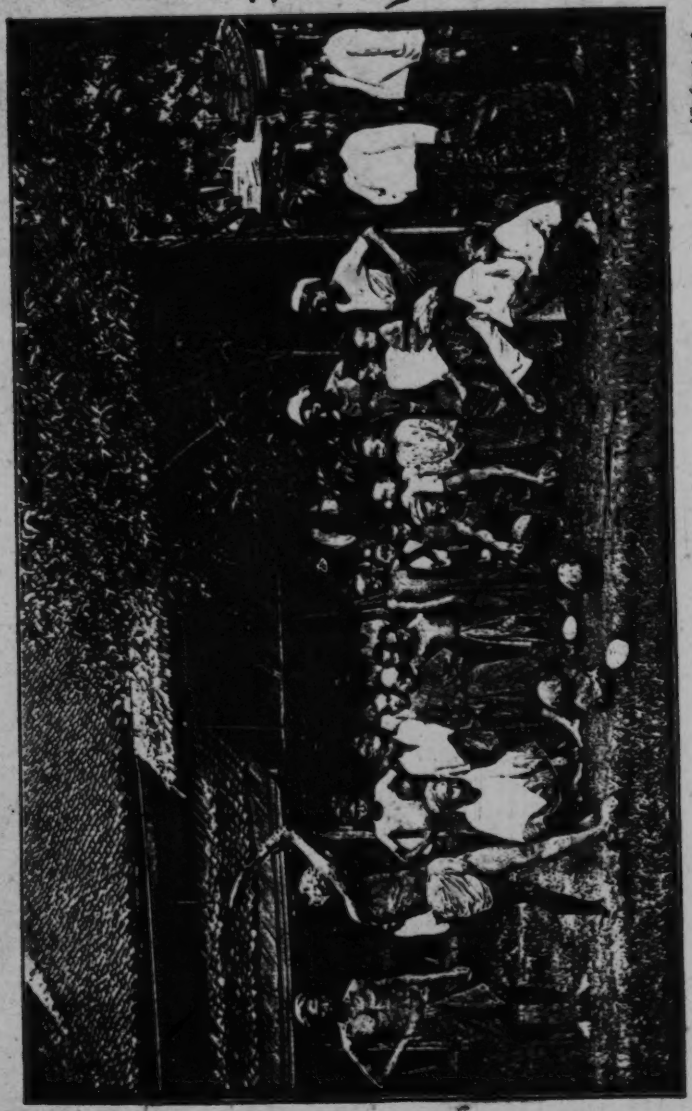
401. CHINLON GAME.

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

[opp. p. 178]



402. SLASHING COCOA-NUTS.

[To face p. 178.

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25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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408. CHESS.

Slashing cocoanuts (*ôngôt*) is a favourite sport in the North. A green cocoanut is balanced on the top of another, and has to be severed in two across the fibre at a blow of the sabre. This requires both power and knack. The villagers bet on who will sever the greatest number without a miss.

Cock-fighting is condemned by the popular religion, together with everything that causes pain or inflames the passions. Nevertheless, the people are greatly addicted to it; they bet heavily on their birds. A large long-legged fowl of the Shanghai type is bred for fighting. The Talaings in the South are fond of making bulls fight, especially bull buffaloes.

526 The every-day outdoor sport of Burma is the *chinlôn* game. A light springy ball is made of five interlacing circles of split rattan, four or five in a tier, with large open interspaces. The object is to keep the ball up, and the only rule is that the ball may not be touched with the hand. The nearest player advances to meet it, and if he be a tyro, he is content to kick the ball up; there are no turns. A good player will send the ball into the air again and again with decreasing force till he allows it to alight in the hollow of his shoulder. Thence he lets it roll down the back of the arm and jerks it off at the elbow to catch it on the knee, and, changing his foot like a flash, strikes the ball high from the back, with the opposite sole, for another player to vary the performance in as original a way as he can (Nos. 160, 162). The game implies a perfect command of every muscle. Players are not at their best till twenty-five or thirty. There can be no winning in this game, which is played for the pure love of skill.

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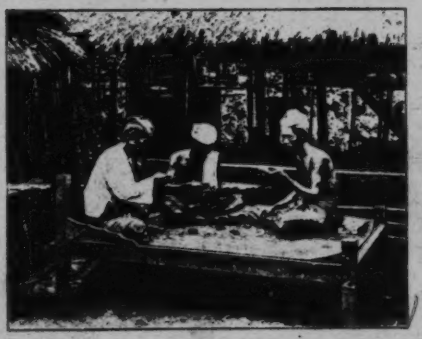
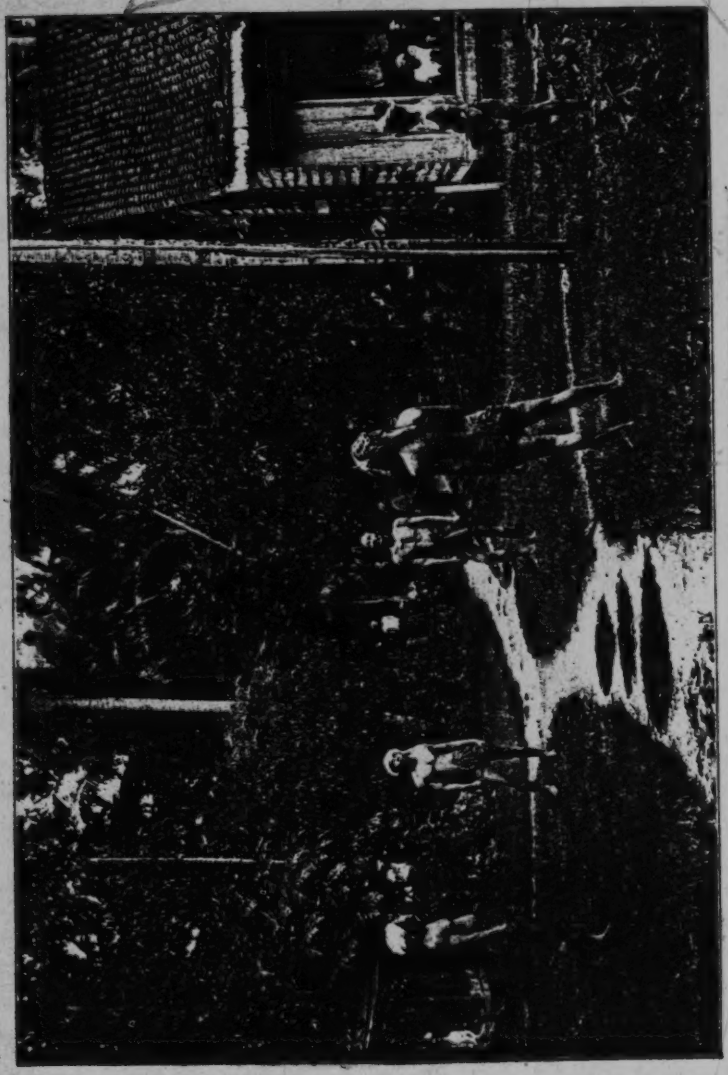


404. DOMINOES.

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

[OPP. P.180]



407. CHINLON GAME.

[To face p. 180

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25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

796
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[241]
[821]

414. WATER-THROWING AT NEW-YEAR.

Party feeling, which often runs high between the quarters of a village, with their rival *kyaung* and *zedi*, finds an outlet at *Tagú* in the tug-of-war (*lun-swè*). As the superstitious whistle for the wind, so do they expect to tug in the monsoon by this means, at the season when everything is panting for rain.

After *Tagú*, the next festival season is *Wàzò*—in June—the commencement of the Buddhist Lent. This season is signalised by the *Shinláung fêtes*, described in Chapter III. During Lent there is no regular festival.

The great festival of *Thadîndyút* celebrates the close of Lent. It falls in October, when the rains are generally over, and is the one for which the most extensive preparations are made. Every festival is signalised by the offerings made to the *yahán*. But now they are literally "poured" in profusion, as the word implies (*sun-láung*). *Yazamá*—paths fenced with bamboo trellis, such as those prepared for the progress of royalty—are got ready along the chief thoroughfare. Through these on the morning of the great day the *yahán* defile in endless procession. As many as a thousand *yahán* may be invited to receive the *Thadîndyút* offerings in a large town. The offerings are poured into the alms-bowls by the laity; scholars are stationed at intervals to relieve the *yahán* of their loads of offerings. After the *yahán* come *pôthudaw* and *mèthilá*. Both ends of the *yazamá* are decorated with arches of bamboo and tinsel. About these are grouped life-size figures of mythical import—dragons to guard the entrance, princes and princesses of the *nats* to take part in the honour done to the *Thingâ* (No. 151). In the evenings fire-

[792
735]

415. KAMBOW PROCESSION AT NEW-YEAR.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

balloons are sent off, and the rivers are illuminated with rafts carrying lamps which are set adrift. Labyrinths of bamboo are erected round the *zedi*, which entertain the children and especially the hill-people, who pique themselves, not

416. NEW-YEAR TUG-OF-WAR.

without reason, on their sense of locality. These labyrinths are called *Wingabá*, after the mountain maze, to which Prince Wéthandayâ was banished by his father, in the *zát* legend.

Tazáung-mòn is the next festival after *Thadíndyút*; it is kept in Pegu, but not in Burma Proper. At this season Buddhists commemorate the miraculous journey of Gawdama Buddha to the *nat* country after the death of his mother, to impart to her the enlightenment which had come to him on earth, and by means of which he had attained peace. Spires of bamboo-work and tinsel—the *tazáung-daing*—are built twenty to fifty feet high, as symbols of the stair by which Gawdama ascended. These are carried round the place with music, and are finally dedicated at the *zedi* (No. 422). In the months of *Tazáung-mòn* and *Thadíndyút* the *katín-thingán* are dedicated, and the *mathó-thingán* are woven. The *katín-thingán* is the annual supply of the primitive *paríkaya*, and is of a nominal character, owing to the profusion of offerings at other times. The *mathó-thingán* is a cloth wherewith to deck the images of the Buddha and the *pawng* of the *zedi* (Nos. 429, 449). It is the offering of the women who weave it,

417. SUNLAUNG AT THADINDYUT FESTIVAL.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

788
173

a Karén from this neighbourhood was taken prisoner in the wars and carried to Ava, where he eventually became *yahán*. One night he dreamt that in the cavity of a rock, on a hill near his home, were two hairs of the Buddha which had been deposited by Ôttara and Sawnasé, the missionary *yahán* who brought Buddhism to Pegu; they died and attained *parî-nirvana* at this place, and were buried at the foot of the hill. The Karén was allowed to travel to the spot, where he found what he had seen in his dream; a *zedi* was built there, which is now a famous resort of pilgrims—*Kôthena yón* (No. 280).

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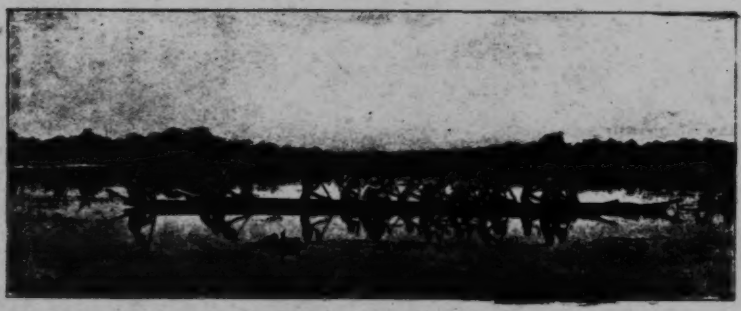

480. CANOES RACING (p. 178).